

BOOK RACK AND PENCIL TRAY COMBINATION

by

Robert J. Mills

and

Peter Glass

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to furniture and, more particularly, to accessories for student desks.

5

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Desks for students in classroom settings are frequently of a simple design comprising a desk top and supporting legs. To provide the student with a compartment for

storing books and notebooks, manufacturers have sometimes added a book rack to the underside of the desk top. At the request of many school districts, such a book rack is often made from a wire mesh or is otherwise made intentionally "porous" to make it difficult for a student to hide inappropriate objects within the book rack. Unfortunately, although such wire mesh or otherwise "porous" book racks are useful in retaining large items, such as books and notebooks, they are unsuitable for retaining smaller items, such as pencils, pens and rulers. There is therefore a need in the prior art for a book rack which overcomes this problem in the prior art.

SUMMARY

The invention satisfies this need. The invention is a book rack and pencil tray combination comprising (a) a book rack having a front opening and a bottom wall, the bottom wall having at least one opening, and (b) a pencil case attached to the book rack.

DRAWINGS

These features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with regard to the following description, appended claims and accompanying figures where:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a book basket and pencil tray combination having features of the invention;

Figure 2 is an exploded view of the combination illustrated in Figure 1; and

Figure 3 is a cross-sectional view of the combination illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, taken along line 3-3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following discussion describes in detail one embodiment of the invention and several variations of that embodiment. This discussion should not be construed, however, as limiting the invention to those particular embodiments. Practitioners skilled in the art will recognize numerous other embodiments as well.

In one embodiment, the invention is a book rack and pencil tray combination **18** comprising a book rack **20** and a pencil case **22**. In another embodiment, the invention is a desk **10** to which is attached such a book rack and pencil tray combination **18**.

Figure 1 illustrates a desk **10** having a desk top **12** and a support structure **13** to support the desk top **12** at an elevation above floor level. In the embodiment illustrated in the drawings, the support structure **13** comprises four vertically adjustable legs **14**. The desk top **12** has a top surface **15** suitable for working upon, and a bottom surface **16**.

Attached to the bottom surface **16** of the desk top **12** is the book rack and pencil tray combination **18** of the invention. The book rack and pencil tray **18** combination is more fully illustrated in Figures 2 and 3.

The book rack and pencil tray combination **18** comprises the book rack **20** and the pencil tray **22**. The book rack **20** has a front opening **34** and bottom wall **28**. The bottom wall **28** has at least one opening **23**. In a typical embodiment, such as the embodiment illustrated in the drawings, the book rack **20** is of wire mesh design, typically comprising a

plurality of parallel, spaced apart first support members **24** to which are each attached a plurality of parallel, spaced apart second support members **26**. The second support members **26** are typically disposed at right angles to the first support members **24**, such as that which is illustrated in the drawings. The first support members **24** are typically attached to the second support members **26** by an adhesive or some form of welding process. The first support members **24** and the second support members **26** are typically made of steel, although fiberglass, plastics and other metals can also be used. Where the material is a metal, it is typically painted or coated with a corrosion resistant material.

The book rack **20** optionally also comprises a pair of opposed side walls **30** and a rear wall **32**. The book rack **20** can also comprise clips **36** or other similar accessories to facilitate the attachment of the book rack **20** to the bottom surface **16** of the desk top **12**.

The pencil case **22** is typically made from a plastic material. Other materials, such as woods, fiberglass and metals, can also be used. The pencil case **22** typically has a bottom wall **38**, a pair of opposed side walls **40**, a front wall **42** and a rear wall **44**.

The pencil case **22** can define one or more separate compartments. In the embodiment illustrated in the drawings, the pencil case **22** defines a pair of separate compartments, a lower compartment **46** and an upper compartment **48**. The lower compartment **46** can be relatively narrow and be suitable for retaining pens and pencils. The upper compartment **48** can be wider than the lower compartment **46** and be therefore suitable for retaining rulers, protractors and the like. In the embodiment illustrated in the drawings, the lower compartment **46** is disposed outside the front opening **34** of the book rack **20** for easy access to the lower compartment **46** and to allow for greater depth of the lower compartment **46** without restricting access to the book rack **20** through the front opening **34**. Additionally, the lower compartment **46** is typically disposed in a generally horizontal plane which is at an elevation lower than the generally horizontal plane within which the bottom wall

28 of the book rack 20 is disposed.

The pencil case 22 is firmly attached to the book rack 20. In the embodiment illustrated in the drawings, the pencil case 22 is firmly attached to the bottom wall 28 of the book rack 20 by a pencil case attachment plate 50. The pencil case attachment plate 50 can be made from a metal, such as steel, or from other materials, such as fiber glass, plastics or woods. The pencil case attachment plate 50 is attached to the bottom wall 38 of the pencil case 22 by rivets 52, screws, bolts or other suitable attachment means. The pencil case attachment plate 50 is attached to the bottom wall 38 of the pencil case 22, such that a portion of the bottom wall 28 of the book rack 20 is sandwiched between the pencil case attachment plate 50 and the bottom wall 28 of the pencil case 22.

The invention provides a simple, efficient and inexpensive method of providing a desk with a wire mesh or otherwise "porous" book rack which is capable of retaining small objects, such as pens and rulers.

Having thus described the invention, it should be apparent that numerous structural modifications and adaptations may be resorted to without departing from the scope and fair meaning of the instant invention as set forth hereinabove and as described hereinbelow by the claims.